

# Nelfinavir

*nel-FIN-a-veer*

**Brand Name:** Viracept

**Drug Class:** Protease Inhibitors

Nelfinavir mesylate, also known as Viracept, belongs to the class of antiretroviral drugs called protease inhibitors (PIs). PIs act by blocking protease, a protein that HIV needs to make more copies of itself.

## HIV/AIDS-Related Uses

Nelfinavir mesylate was approved by the FDA on March 14, 1997, for use with other antiretrovirals in the treatment of HIV infection and for the prevention of HIV infection in individuals who have been exposed to the virus. This medicine does not cure HIV infection or AIDS and does not reduce the risk of passing the virus to other people.

## Dosage Form/Administration

Nelfinavir comes in tablet and powder form and should be taken by mouth with food. Nelfinavir powder may be mixed with water, milk, formula, soy milk, and other dairy foods, such as pudding or ice cream.

## Recommended Daily Dose

The recommended adult dose of nelfinavir is 1,250 mg (five 250 mg tablets or two 625 mg tablets) twice a day or 750 mg (three 250 mg tablets) three times a day. The recommended dose of nelfinavir for children age 2 years and older is based on weight.

Some patients may benefit from different doses of nelfinavir. Patients should always take nelfinavir as prescribed by their doctors.

## Contraindications

Patients should tell a doctor about any pre-existing conditions before taking this medicine.

## Possible Side Effects

Along with its desired effects, nelfinavir can cause some serious unwanted effects, including changes in body fat, high cholesterol, increased bleeding in patients with hemophilia, high sugar levels in the blood, and onset or worsening of diabetes. Tell your doctor if you have any of these side effects.

Other side effects may not be serious and may lessen or disappear with continued use of the

medicine. Less serious side effects of this medicine include gas, mild to moderate diarrhea, nausea, and rash. Individuals should notify their doctor if these symptoms continue or are bothersome.

## Drug and Food Interactions

A doctor should be notified of any other medications being taken, including prescription, nonprescription (over-the-counter), or herbal medications.

## Clinical Trials

For information on clinical trials that involve Nelfinavir, visit the ClinicalTrials.gov web site at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>. In the Search box, enter: Nelfinavir AND HIV Infections.

## Manufacturer Information

Nelfinavir  
Pfizer Inc  
235 East 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10017-5755  
(800) 438-1985

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## For More Information

Contact your doctor or an AIDSinfo Health Information Specialist:

- Via Phone: 1-800-448-0440 Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 5:00 p.m. ET
- Via Live Help: [http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live\\_help](http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live_help) Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 4:00 p.m. ET

